

# Pinupme

JINGLIN ZHONG;  
THE CITY OF MAASTRICHT;  
DEMI-ANN TROMP;  
FEED YOUR BRAIN WITH BOOKS.  
& MORE!

MELANIE RUIZ & SHAWN WEVER:  
AN EVERLASTING LOVE

+

"IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO  
GO BACK TO SCHOOL."

- LIONEL DOROTAAL

+

"I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT  
THE WELL-BEING AND  
HAPPINESS OF OTHERS."

- JOSETTE BURKE

trivago

Charlyze Romanos

ADMIRABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
AS A ONE HAPPY ISLAND GIRL!



# Phryme.

## MAGAZINE

— "Exclusively on expatriate students." —



Cover photographed by Vincent Omar

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www.phrymemagazine.com • issue 003 • february 2018

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# 6

**THE STUDENT CITY:**

# THE MAGICAL MAASTRICHT.

Maastricht is a small university city located at the southern edge of the Netherlands. Located in the most southern of the twelve provinces in the Netherlands, named Limburg. Maastricht is also the capital of the province. The municipality internationally borders Belgium. Maastricht only 60 square kilometers in size, with a total of five districts, and has approximately 121,501 inhabitants living there.





## Why should you visit Maastricht?

In Maastricht it is easy to feel like you're not even in the Netherlands anymore, but also not in Belgium. This could be, because Limburger have a distinctive accent when they speak Dutch or especially in their Limburgish dialects. Maastricht isn't like any of your typical Dutch city, the architecture and structure of the city gives you a totally different aspect of the Netherlands with its cobbled old town/city center and Gothic-style Sint Jan-skerk. This is also because Maastricht is part of the Most Ancient European Towns network and also ranks as the city with the second highest national heritage buildings in the Netherlands, with a total of 1667.

During the holidays, giving Maastricht a visit is surely worth it when they have their annual Christmas Market.

## Why should you study in Maastricht?

Maastricht is a relatively small municipality and city, but, it is just right in its size. About one-tenth of the inhabitants are also students, and according to Maastricht University another twenty percent are international students!

Speaking of international, Maastricht is part of the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion which then adds to every other person in Maastricht could probably speak Dutch, German and French fluently, isn't that wonderful?

There are two major universities within the city, those being Zuyd University of Applied Sciences and Maastricht University. Both schools offer various Bachelor and Master degree programs. As small as Maastricht may appear to be, finding a place to study should never be one of your worries as The Library at Maastricht University has about 2000 learning spaces, there is also a spot on campus called the Bonnefanten Learning Spaces which are also former military barracks, this would be a perfect spot for any history lovers.

For student travel bugs, it could be imagined that this would be a wonderful city to live in because it internationally borders Belgium and Germany. This makes it feasible to travel to the two other countries within a nick of time. A train journey from Maastricht to Antwerp only takes approximately two hours and the return ticket would cost you less than twenty euros! This is probably every student commuter's dream! Some of the other closest international cities to Maastricht are; Aachen, Liege, Eupen and Hasselt.



## Interesting facts about Maastricht

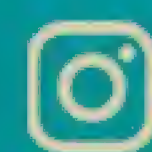
- Maastricht is considered to be the oldest city in the Netherlands because, Maastricht was once part of the Spanish reign for over fifty years going from 1579 up until 1632.
- Maastricht has hidden underground tunnels that go back to the Roman Empire. It is a labyrinth of more than 20,000 tunnels.
- The European Union was founded in Maastricht in 1992.
- Maastricht has a gothic church that is now turned into a library, also known as the Dominicanen Kerk. Some even call it the most beautiful bookstore of the world.





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# OUR ERASMUS EXPERIENCE

## in Frankfurt, Germany.

Last summer, Ivan Feliciano, Tatiana Peña and Jean-Martin Meelis, three students of the University of Aruba moved to Germany to pursue their Erasmus+ Experience. The Erasmus+ Experience is a great option that students can look into to experience the student life abroad. There is something about living abroad that helps a student to expand their mind by confronting new places and culture, which will help to find themselves as an individual and future professional.

*"In 2014, the European Commission awarded the University of Aruba the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education; giving students the opportunity to experience studying abroad while, also, giving students in Europe the chance to experience the university life in Aruba!"*

- University of Aruba

### What's Erasmus Exchange program?

The Erasmus programme is an EU exchange student programme that has been in existence since the late 1980's. Its purpose is to provide foreign exchange options for students from within the European Union; it involves many of the best universities on the continent.

Jumping on the opportunity, Ivan, Tatiana and Jean-Martin choose to go to Frankfurt am Main for six months, to join in on their Erasmus experience. Jean-Martin explains, "The exchange program is a great way to introduce studying abroad, as it teaches you to be self-reliant, resourceful and efficient with your time, all while making new friends and absorbing a new culture."

### Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Frankfurt am Main is a metropolis and the largest city in the German state of Hesse. As part of her research, Tatiana googled Frankfurt to get an idea of how life would be there, she saw a "little New York", Tatiana says, "I wanted to come to Frankfurt because the city is completely opposite from Aruba; and I was craving a city lifestyle." Sharing the same opinion as Tatiana, Jean-martin shares, "Coming from a small island, I wanted to experience and study in a big city. Frankfurt was my first choice, because it is multicultural, hard-working and deemed the financial center of Europe." Coming from a small island, Tatiana, Ivan and Jean-Mar-







tin surely had some expectations from the city – Tatiana was scared that everything would be hard and that people wouldn't be as cordial as they are in Aruba, Ivan thought that perhaps Frankfurt would be a very comfortable city to live- and study, and Jean-Martin added that he expected, "Frankfurt to be all work and no play." But their experience in Frankfurt exceeded their expectations!

They continue sharing that their first month in Frankfurt was though; from being in a whole other continent, with a language they didn't understand, they had to get used to the fact that they are away from their family. For Tatiana and Ivan, their first month was filled with mixed feelings; missing their family to having to attend German classes to learn at least the basics. Luckily, they had to spend learning German with other international students, who were also on the Erasmus program, Jean-martin says, "It was a great way to break the ice while getting to make new friends."

## The University of Frankfurt

Surely, there are big differences between the University of Frankfurt and University of Aruba. For example, Ivan, who is studying Business Economics, explains the biggest difference between the two universities is that, for the six subjects that he's following, none of the subjects require presentations or research; it's basically just theoretical subjects. However, for Tatiana, who is studying Social Work and Development, says that the level of education for the University of Aruba is way higher than from Frankfurt's, regardless she's happy for the opportunity, the knowledge gain and personal growth thanks to the classes.

## Totally recommended

Doing your exchange in a foreign country certainly has advantages, Jean-Martin shares with Phryme his highlight, "The best part of my exchange program was travelling around Europe, which was not as hard as you'd expect on a student budget." Ivan and Tatiana adds, "I even ended up in Russia!" Something very magical about their exchange experience is getting to know people from different countries that Ivan said he "didn't even know existed!"

At the end of such an extraordinary experience, there are lessons learned, knowledge gain and, most importantly, personal growth. Jean-Martin gained an insight to which direction he would want to further his study, Tatiana is happy to bring new ways of thinking and friends back to Aruba and, Ivan became more independent and confident sharing that he "learned to step more out of his comfort zone."

The option for students of Aruba attending the University of Aruba to apply for an Erasmus Exchange program is on the table. The three encourages students to take on this opportunity with Jean-Martin saying, "I would definitely advise anyone to apply for an exchange program. It's a fun experience that gives you an idea of how it would be if you were to further your studies in a foreign country," while Ivan adds, "It's incredible how much experience is condensed in a six-month period."

*If you are an Aruban or European student interested about the Erasmus+ experience program with the University of Aruba, make sure to check out their website or contact the office of international affairs for more information.*





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## LIVING IN SOCIETY'S DEFINITION OF A “MAN’S WORLD”

**D**emi-Ann Tromp is a 22-year-old student living in Bergen op Zoom, the Netherlands who is currently studying to become an Aircraft Technician at Marziekaat College.

### BEFORE THE NETHERLANDS

Demi attended Colegio Arubano, HAVO, for three years, then stayed back a year and went to MAVO. After graduating MAVO, Demi went on to proceed with her education at Colegio Educacion Profesional Intermedio (EPI), MBO 4, where she attended the College of Science and Technology. Four years later, Demi graduated as the best graduate within her program, obtaining the Mechanical Engineer degree.

### DEMI'S ASPIRATION

While Demi attended Colegio Arubano, she noticed that, in her third year, the studies were getting harder for her, which had contributed to her staying behind a year. Demi went to MAVO with the thought of going back to Colegio after graduating. Instead, one of her educators suggested for Demi to go to Colegio EPI because there she would also get courses such as Physics and Chemistry and she would get more hands-on experience – and so she did.

While Demi was at Colegio EPI, she wanted to become a Pilot; she would ask herself, “Why not fix the aircraft instead?” and that is where it all started.

We asked Demi what she thinks about people saying that her future job is a man’s job, she laughed and replied with,

### “WHAT’S A MAN’S JOB?”

When Demi used to work for Jet International in Aruba, She often had to go and control aircraft that just landed. Most of the time, the flight attendants would confuse her with the aircraft cleaners. According to Demi, she would, oftentimes, get mad and tell them that she is

not a cleaner and that she is the Assistant Mechanics. The flight attendants would be astonished, ask her why and if she likes her job. Demi would say that it's an amazing experience and that she loves the adrenaline rush she gets whenever an airplane lands! If the airplane needed to be controlled, or if there were any problems, she will assist to fix it before it took off again.

### DEMI'S GOALS

Demi is thinking about entering the military to work on military aircraft. She has the option to enroll in a course called VEVA, which will enable her to get her certifications to work on military aircraft. Demi’s ultimate goal is to get licensed and be able to have the authority to give authority for an airplane to take off.

**“I REMEMBER WHEN MY FORMER BOSS CALLED ME AT TWO IN THE MORNING AND ASKED ME IF I CAN GO TO THE AIRPORT BECAUSE THERE WAS AN ISSUE WITH AN AIRPLANE.”**

Demi explained that being an Aircraft Technician is very interesting and unique because you learn something new every day. In addition, Demi shares that you will be attending trainings and courses to help refresh your mind and obtain new information depending on the Aircrafts you have to work with.





### DEMI'S ADVICE TO OTHER STUDENTS

Focus on your studies, give it your best shot, because you are given an opportunity that is a privilege not everyone has.

- **DO YOU HAVE A MOTTO THAT YOU LIVE BY?**

I try to do whatever I want and try to be the best to accomplish my goals. I keep telling myself that I can do it. Learn from your mistakes, prepare yourself for a new day and new goals coming your way. One of the challenges Demi has faced in her studies is to achieve a grade of 75%, or more, for each of her courses. Demi, also, struggles with the Dutch language.

**"COMING FROM A SMALL ISLAND THAT IS ABOUT 4900 MILES AWAY FROM HOME, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT BECAUSE YOU ARE HERE ALL BY YOURSELF. YOU HAVE TO FIGHT YOUR WAY THROUGH AND THERE IS NO MOM AND DAD HERE TO HELP YOU."**

- **ARE THERE ANY OTHER THINGS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE WORLD?**

Being an Aircraft Technician demands a lot of pressure and responsibility. Whenever you perform work and sign the papers involved for the aircraft, you are the responsible one. For example, if you don't pay attention, install the incorrect quantity of a series of screws on a panel and the panel comes off during flight then it's your responsibility because you didn't follow the proper manuals and procedures.

**"WHEN I WAS A LITTLE CHILD I WANTED TO BECOME AN ASTRONAUT JUST LIKE NEIL ARMSTRONG."**

Last but not least, Demi's advice for anyone who would like to do this type of study is to think it through and, if it's really what you want to do for the rest of your life, go for it. Always remember the reason you came to study abroad and remain focused.



# 14

**LIONEL DOROTAAL:**

**AGE DOES  
NOT MATTER  
WHEN IT COMES  
TO PURSUING  
A DEGREE.**



**M**eet Lionel, a 30-year-old student at Inholland University of Applied Sciences studying Media and Entertainment Management. He's a future entrepreneur in the entertainment industry, an industry he knows very well since he could remember. But before that Lionel wants to prove that age does not matter when it comes to pursuing a degree. He stands for the one's who cannot afford to go to school and for the one's who never made it. Read about his life in Aruba, his decision to move abroad and his future plans.



### LIONEL'S LIFE IN ARUBA

Lionel grew up in a household where he stood up as the father figure of the family. Together with his older sister and mother, they had it all. Lionel described himself as, "The almost perfect child." On weekends, he would stay home and would always stay out of trouble. Back then, his ambition was to become a politician and/or a lawyer. For that reason, he joined the Youth Parliament Aruba and represented his then-school Maria College. Right after, he went to Colegio Arubano and described this as one of his learning experiences. Graduating from Colegio Arubano, he pursued an English teaching program at the University of the Netherlands Antilles in Curacao. Ever since then, he wanted to move to the Netherlands, however, he felt he wasn't ready. Lionel decided to go back to Aruba where he worked for Digicel as an accountant and was able to go to New York for further studies. While working, he was also very involved in charity work, sang in a band and took part in various Television commercials. A very famous one was one where he was the genie for the Seaport Casino commercial. Shortly after, he took part as an actor in the local film called Abo so. It was around that time where he started working as an event assistant for Rosetty Eleonora. He then knew where his passion lied, in the entertainment/event industry.





**“JUST DO IT! TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY AND SEIZE IT! IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL. THE MORE YOU LEARN, THE MORE KNOWLEDGE YOU WILL GAIN!”**

## TAKING THE LEAP

By the end of 2014, Lionel decided to take up on yet another challenge; he decided to move to the Netherlands. While this was certainly a challenge for him, the biggest challenge was the fact that he was going back to school. After arranging everything and saying goodbye to his loved ones, he flew to the land of opportunities. A place he knew would give him more space to grow and learn. From then on, he reminded himself everyday to “leave everything in the past and move forward because life goes on.” A new adventure awaited him, which made it very exciting and definitely a risk he was willing to take.

## STARTING ALL OVER...

Lionel described his first day at the University as, “Awkward and weird,” since, this time, he was the one sitting and being taught to, instead of the other way around. Another reason was the fact that he was one of the oldest students. However, studying with international students made it easier for him to adapt. According to Lionel, “Studying with international students is very different compared to a full Dutch class. People come from different countries, with different backgrounds and this has helped me a lot on how to live abroad. We shared similar experiences and I could easily relate to them.” Living abroad is not easy, Lionel argued that your attitude and open mindedness plays a huge role.

## IN FIVE YEARS...

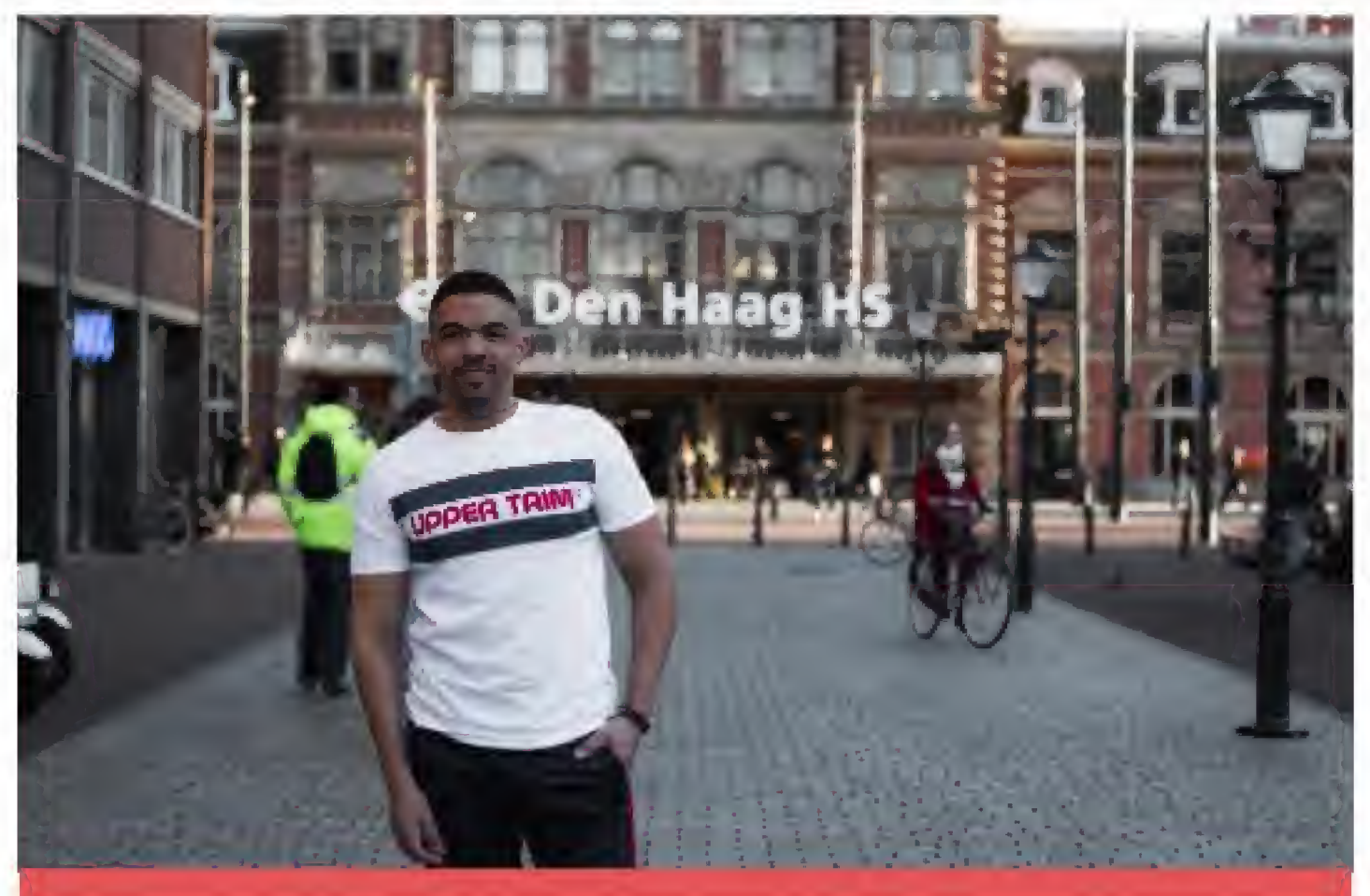
He wishes to work in the field of Media and Entertainment for one or two years to gain experience. Afterwards, he wants to start with his own events company in the Netherlands, where he will be able to showcase and offer his talent. In the near future he wants to pursue a Masters degree.

- **IF YOU COULD GIVE YOUR 20-YEAR-OLD SELF AN ADVICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

Don't block yourself due to fear. Be open to take risks and enjoy life!

- **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS ABOVE 25 AND WANTS TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL?**

Just do it! Take the opportunity and seize it! it is never too late to go back to school. The more you learn, the more knowledge you will gain!







MERSEA

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# 18

## Cultural Shock and Gratitude in HONG KONG

Jinglin Zhong is a Chinese-Aruban student studying Economics at the Tilburg University, moved to the Netherlands in 2015 and has recently attended one semester at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In this Q&A, Jinglin opens up about her time in Hong Kong, the unexpected challenges she faced during her stay, the adventures she went on and the things Hong Kong taught her about her own life.

- **WHEN DID THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY ABROAD ARISE?**

During the first year of my study, the opportunity to study abroad for one semester was presented to us. However, I wasn't sure if I wanted to go since I had just gotten used to the life in the Netherlands. In my second year, I had grown tired of Tilburg as I was constantly busy with my academic life all year long; I would spend eight hours a day on the weekend for projects. Hence, I felt like I needed a change of environment to recollect myself.

- **WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO GO TO HONG KONG?**

I decided to go to Hong Kong because I wanted to learn more and to get in touch with my Chinese culture. Part of that experience was meeting my family members in China, whom I haven't seen in fifteen years.

*"I grew up in Aruba and I consider myself more of an Aruban than a Chinese, but my roots are in China."*

Hong Kong is much more culturally diverse compared to the rest of China, and I saw it as an opportunity to learn more about the Chinese culture in a culturally diverse city. In Hong

Kong, their second language is English which would make it is easier for me to communicate with the locals. On top of that, one of the items on my bucket list was to learn Mandarin. It was a perfect learning experience to get in touch with my culture.

- **DID YOU TRAVEL WHILE YOU WERE IN HONG KONG?**

I managed to travel to Macau, Thailand, and China. While I was in Thailand, I was able to pet an elephant. While I was in China I visited different family members in different cities such

as Guangzhou, Foshan, and Shenzhen. Every city I visited was a completely different experience.

- **DID IT TAKE A LOT OF PREPARATION FOR HONG KONG?**

Well, at first, I had to mentally prepare myself for it, I kept telling myself, "Everything will be okay." I kept telling myself that Hong Kong was probably going to be very crowded compared to Tilburg and that it might get overwhelming. That's how I was trying to prepare myself for the experience.







## • WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE?

Hong Kong opened my eyes to many beautiful things, but it also opened my eyes to how hard people have to work in order to survive. For example, there are many elderly people collecting cardboards on the streets to sell them to recycling companies to earn money; it made me understand how tough life can be. It also made me realize how grateful us westerns should be to have the opportunities we have, which are provided by our parents, the government and our education.

## TOP 3 THINGS TO DO IN HONG KONG:

1. **GO TO VICTORIA PEAK;**
2. **VISIT THE BIG BUDDHA MONASTERY;**
3. **TRY THE TYPICAL HONG KONG EGG WAFFLES.**

It was very important for me to broaden my horizons because I'm always trying to learn and gain more life experience. So, before leaving, I was ready to open myself up to new cultures and experiences.

## • WAS HONG KONG WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

It was similar to what I expected, but the magnitude of it was beyond what I had imagined. For example, the population density, the poverty gap, and immense height of the skyscrapers. On top of that, Hong Kong is a metropolitan city where tradition and modernity collide. At the beginning, it was very overwhelming and I found myself culturally shocked.

The people and the social life are very different, there's a very fast phased way of life in Hong Kong.

*"There's no room for small talk or beating around the bush because everyone's got to be somewhere or has something else scheduled."*

## • HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THE CULTURAL SHOCK?

It took me over a month to get used to my surroundings in Hong Kong; I

had to take the time to adjust. I made some local and international friends, which made it much easier to adapt.

My international friends and I could share our cultural shock experiences with each other and learn from each other's experiences.

After adjusting to the city, you start to appreciate it much more. During the weekdays I would go to school and during the weekends my friends and I would explore Hong Kong.

*I befriended a local and she taught me so much about the Chinese culture in Hong Kong and China.*

She told me about her life growing up in Hong Kong and the pressure of being economically and academically successful in life.

## • HOW ARE THE UNIVERSITIES DIFFERENT?

As an exchange student, I had to get used to the campus. Luckily, I wasn't the only exchange student like I had originally thought. I met another exchange student from Russia and we hit it off.





# HOW TRUST AND COMMUNICATION CAN MAKE A RELATIONSHIP FLOURISH

MELANIE RUIZ & SHAWN WEVER

**M**elanie and Shawn met in the summer of 2014 when Melanie had just arrived in Tilburg. In less than three weeks they decided to embark in a relationship. Almost four years later, their relationship is flourishing and growing stronger every day.

Melanie, 21, studies International Business and Languages and Shawn, 23, studies to become a Biology teacher; both attending Fontys University of Applied Sciences in Tilburg.

We sat down with Melanie and Shawn to talk about their journey they've shared so far. We spoke about how they met, the challenges they've faced in their relationship, Melanie's time in Australia and their two adorable dogs.



*"I recall him adding me on Facebook before I left Aruba. He knew I was coming to the Netherlands because he volunteered to help Aruban students who were going to Tilburg that year."*

The first encounter between the two was very brief and it consisted of a simple "hello" and a little joke. Later that same week, the two of them got to hang out for the first time at a mutual acquaintance's home. They spent the night playing board games and that's all it took to establish that there was spark on both sides.

On a night out with a group of friends, Shawn finally asked Melanie out on a date. Shawn took Melanie to play pool and afterwards they headed to the movies.

*"I think we both knew that we were going to kiss that night. I didn't want to rush anything though, but during the movie I took the courage and kissed her."*

A few days later, Shawn and Melanie went together for the first time to Amsterdam to visit Shawn's uncle. That's when Shawn took the opportunity to take Melanie to the Sint Jansbrug and ask her to be his girlfriend. After all the all-nighters together and the laughs, they both knew it's what they wanted.





- **WHAT ARE THE THINGS YOU LIKE THE MOST ABOUT EACH OTHER?**

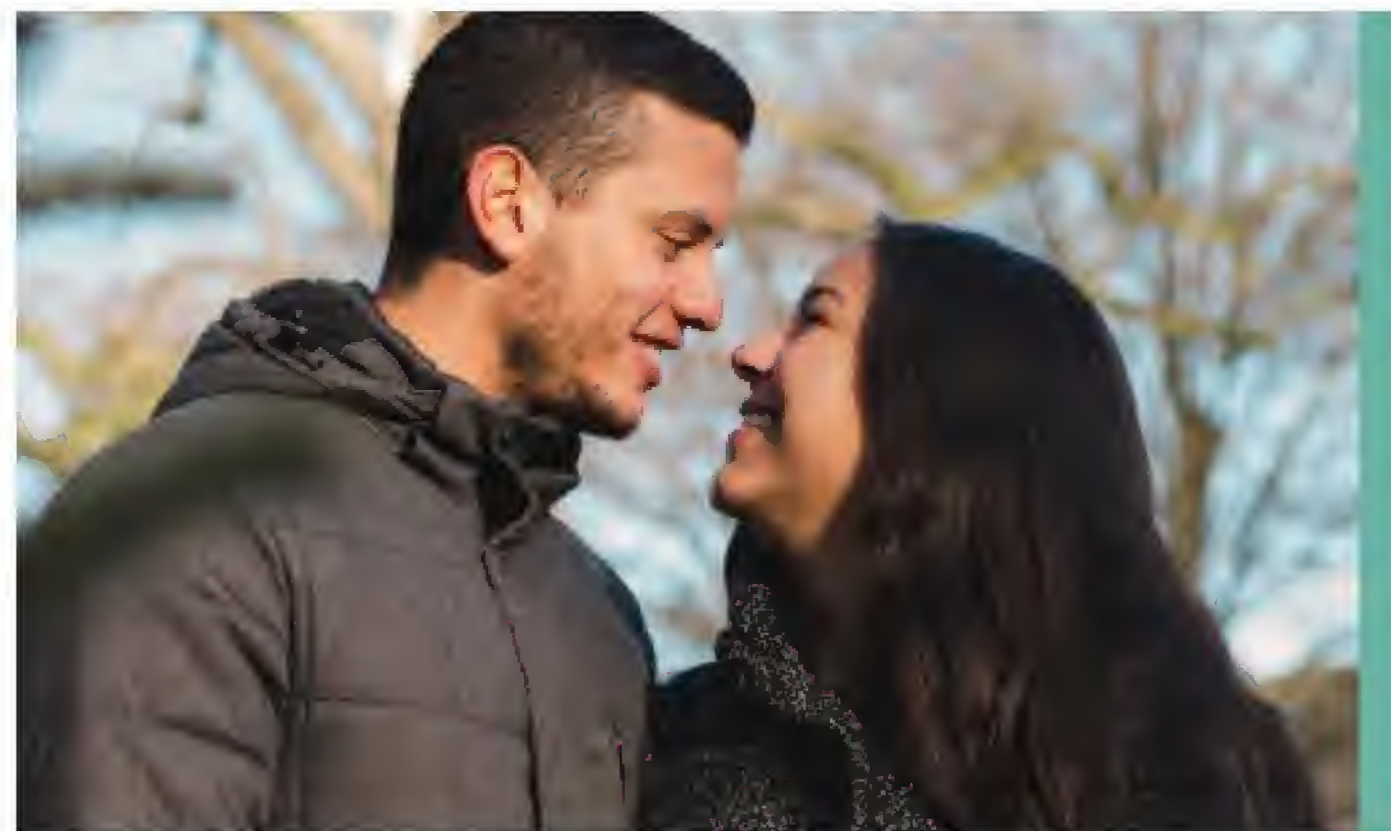
**Shawn:** I like that she's honest when she's giving me advice or an opinion. I like that she cares about me, and I really like that she's adventurous.

**Melanie:** His eyes and the way he treats me are probably two of my favorite things about him. I also like that he's social, has respect and love for my family. That, to me, is one of the most important things.

- **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU'VE FACED IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP?**

**Shawn:** Well, to me, the challenges were in the little details and habits; I had to get used to communicating my plans with Melanie. Specially at the beginning of our relationship, sometimes I would get home late and I had forgotten to mention to Melanie that I had soccer practice. Another thing I had to get used to was communicating through Whatsapp. Sometimes I'd read her messages and I would forget to answer her and that did not make her very happy.

**Melanie:** At the beginning of our relationship we had some communication issues, because Shawn would forget to let me know certain things I thought were important. Also, he was very unorganized when we met. That was a real challenge, but there have been great improvements. Other than that, for me personally, I felt like I was losing touch with a couple of my friends because of my relationship.



- **DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP CHANGED YOU AS A PERSON?**

**Shawn:** Yes. I learned how to deal with certain situations and overcome obstacles to make my relationship work. Simple things like scheduling and communication. Other than that, my relationship taught me a lot about trust and how to be supportive of someone else.

**Melanie:** My relationship has helped me become more mature and it made me think a lot about my future as well. When you've been with a person for over three years, you can't help but imagine a future with them.

One of the challenges the couple had to face during their relationship was a long period away from each other. Melanie got the opportunity to do a six-month internship in Manley, Australia and decided that it was what she wanted to do. So, the couple went from living together and seeing each other every day, to not seeing each other for six months.

Melanie told us why doing her internship in Australia was so important for her,

*"At the beginning of my relationship Shawn and I spent a lot of time together – like a lot. I don't regret the time we spent together at all, but if I could go back, I would make more time for myself. That's why going to Australia was very important and special to me, because it gave me the time I needed to be with myself and explore new things on my own."*

Shawn wasn't as excited about the idea when it first came up, but he later realized that supporting Melanie was more important to him than anything else,

*"I have to be honest, when Melanie first heard about the opportunity of doing an internship abroad, she mentioned to me that she would love to go to Australia. That was three years ago; I didn't like the idea of her being away for so long and I didn't want to lose what we were building together. But, when she was ready to leave, all I could think about was supporting her. I wanted her to enjoy and have the time of her life, which she did!"*





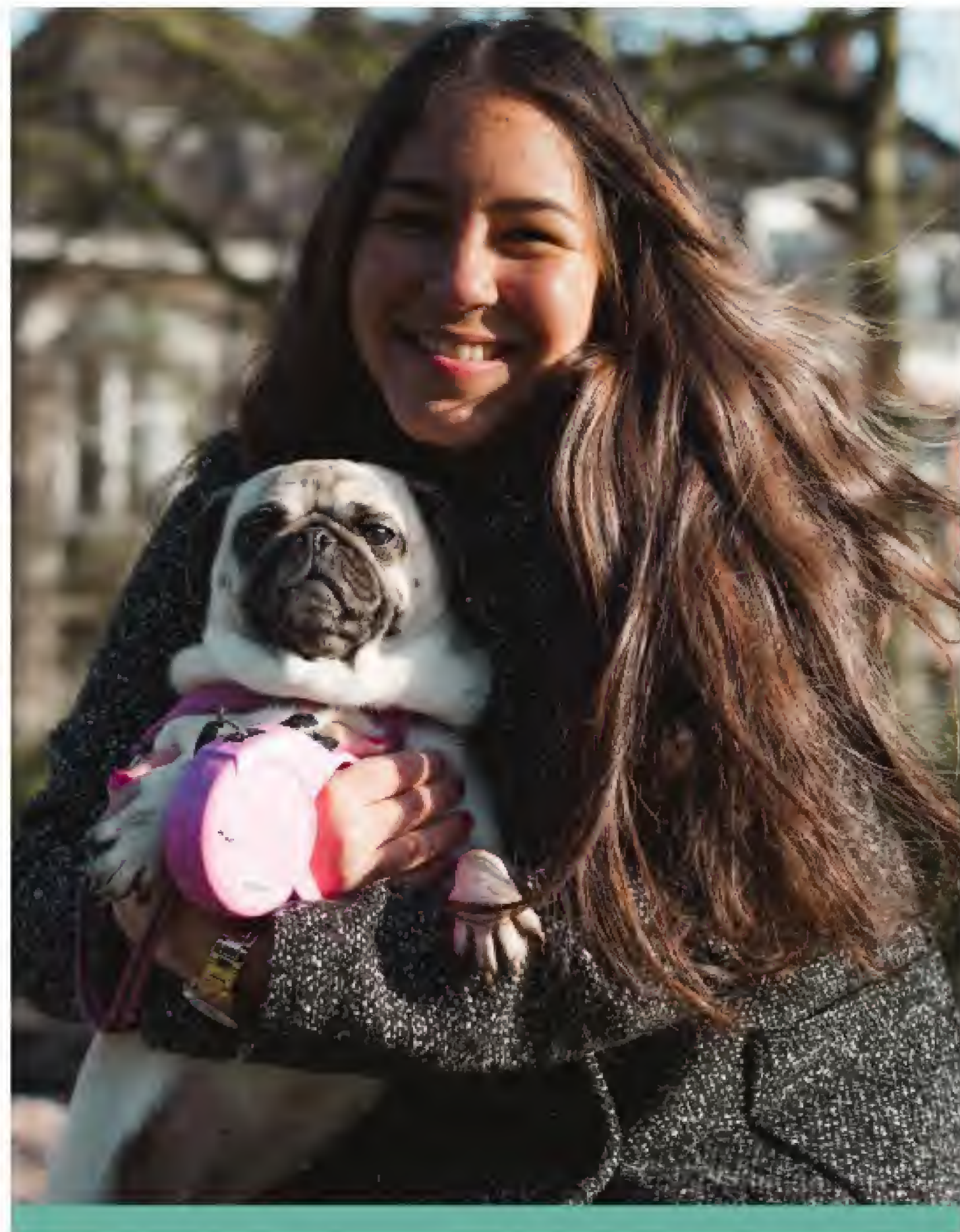
Shawn even has a golden tip for couples who are going to embark on a long-distance journey, "When you know you're going to enter a long-distance phase in your relationship, make sure you take the time to build an extra layer of trust and honesty with each other. Because once there's trust and honesty you can overcome anything."

Melanie was keen to tell us about her experience in Manly, a beach-side suburb of northern Sydney, "People are so laid back here. The beaches are beautiful, and the weather is very nice! During my stay I got to travel to many places in Australia and did things I never thought I would do in my life! Like hugging koala's, diving in the Great Barrier Reef, visiting the Red Centre and sleeping outside beside a campfire!"

While Melanie was speaking of beaches and beautiful weather, we couldn't help but ask if Australia reminded her of home, "Yes! Even though it's very different, it did. It also has to do with the Australians, who are very open and kind people." – She responded and added,

***"I'm also very proud that many Australians now know where Aruba is because of me."***

During the time that Melanie was away, Shawn was in the Netherlands studying, doing his own internship and working extra hours to visit Melanie in Australia, "There was a lot of pressure to get everything done right, my work, my internship and school, because that was the only way I could visit her and enjoy my time in Australia to the fullest. We ended up having a great time together in Australia, so the hard work definitely paid off!"



Melanie and Shawn are parents to two beautiful dogs – Mojo, a Jack Russell Terrier and Sparkles, a Pug. When Melanie and Shawn first met, Shawn already had Mojo. Later, Melanie decided to get a puppy of her own, Sparkles. Now the couple can't imagine their lives without their two dogs, Mojo and Sparkles,

***"When I decided to get Sparkles, I was living in a student house. So, technically, I couldn't get a dog. I spoke with Shawn about the idea because he was living on his own. That's when we made the decision that raising Sparkles was something we were going to do together. Raising two dogs together definitely forces you to communicate much more and make compromises. At the beginning, we didn't always see eye-to-eye with the way we were raising the dogs but that's part of it; it brought us closer."***  
– Melanie

***"Mojo was already a bit older when Melanie and, later, Sparkles came along. I had my own way of disciplining Mojo and taking care of him, which is very different than Melanie's. The good thing is that we're both dog people, so we found a balance. But, having pets is definitely a good way to bond in a relationship."*** – Shawn

At the end of the interview Melanie and Shawn agreed that the most important things to make a relationship work are communication, trust, honesty, and the ability to support each other individually.



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## The benefits of feeding your brain with books.

**D**oes your daily reading habits center around Facebook updates? If so, maybe you should consider reading a book.

Reading books is one of the best habits one can develop because they can have a great significance in a human's life. If you are one of the countless people who doesn't make a habit of reading a book regularly, you might be missing out. Here are some reasons why you should start reading a book.

People often say reading books is a waste of time or it's boring. However, there are various reasons why reading, in general, is very important and beneficial. Studies show that it can protect you from Alzheimer's disease or Dementia. It can also help your brain to be more active and find out the real you – giving you a different perspective on life.

You might say that you do your daily readings through your social media or online articles. If you are doing this already, keep it up! Still, it will not harm you to switch it up by reading an actual book. From experience, books are like movies, the only difference is that when reading a book, you engage with the story and your imagination runs wild. A personal favorite is when a book tells an actual story and it continues with sequels, for example, the Harry Potter-, Game of Thrones-, and Hunger Games series. Which, eventually, were made into a movie. Bookworms share the same opinion regarding books turning into movies; the book story will always be the best version – for you. Because, since you already read the book, you created your own vision and world around it.

### WHY YOU SHOULD START READING BOOKS:

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- Tranquility;
- Improved Focus & Concentration;
- Stronger Analytical Thinking Skills;
- Stress Reduction;
- Better Writing Skills.



Photographer: Anne Soratt  
Writer: Ma Lagare

After reading the benefits of reading a book, hopefully, this will motivate you to pick out a book either at the local bookstore or online bookshops. Remember, one strong argument you will always have once you start reading books is that,

**"GREAT BOOKS HELP YOU UNDERSTAND AND THEY HELP YOU FEEL UNDERSTOOD."**





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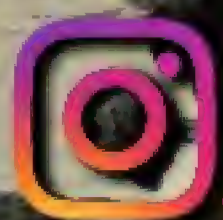


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A sunset scene over the ocean. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, with the sun low on the horizon. The ocean is a deep blue-grey color. In the foreground, there is a rocky shore with dark, jagged rocks. The text "More passion is what this world needs." is written in a white, cursive font in the upper left quadrant.

*"More passion is what  
this world needs."*



**@islandpassion297**  
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# ISLANDPASSION297

PHOTOGRAPHY



# 28

Photographer: Vincent Omar  
Writer: Zoe Arendsz  
Location: Aruba



Sharlyze Romano

"I'M DEFINITELY NOT THE TYPE TO WORK 9-TO-5!"

**INDESCRIBABLE OPPORTUNITIES  
MANY WOULD DIE FOR!**

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# "I AM CURRENTLY IN ARUBA, BUT I'M ACTUALLY BASED IN GERMANY, DÜSSELDORF, BUT WILL BE FLYING TO MIAMI, FLORIDA IN 10 DAYS!"

Sharlyze answered and laughed when asked where she is currently living, because that answer basically sums up her adventurous traveling lifestyle. Sharlyze Romano, 25, is an Aruban young-professional, known for living in multiple cities and countries with her hospitality background and personality.

## HER EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Sharlyze attended Colegio Arubano HAVO and graduated as class of 2010, she then made the personal decision to study in Orlando, Florida, in order to be closer to home – Aruba. In Orlando, Sharlyze attended Valencia College and graduated with an Associate of Science Degree in Hospitality Management & Tourism in December, 2012.

Just like many other students wanting to go to University of Central Florida, Sharlyze shortly found out that UCF would no longer be granting Caribbean students in-state tuition fee. Sharlyze had no choice but to look for scholarships, "I was lucky," Sharlyze said, "The U.S. is all about the extra curriculum activities you perform and, while in Aruba, I was very active in scouting and with community service – dedicating thirteen years to volunteer work," she adds.

**"I HAD VERY GOOD GRADES IN VALENCIA, WHICH IS WHY I WAS OFFERED TWO SCHOLARSHIPS – JOHNSON & WALES IN RHODE ISLAND AND NIAGARA UNIVERSITY IN NEW YORK."**

Sharlyze opted to attend Niagara University, located near the Canadian and U.S. border where Sharlyze said, "I could literally see Canada from my dorm window in Niagara. It's upstate New York, brutal winters! But, I saw it as an opportunity I had to grasp."

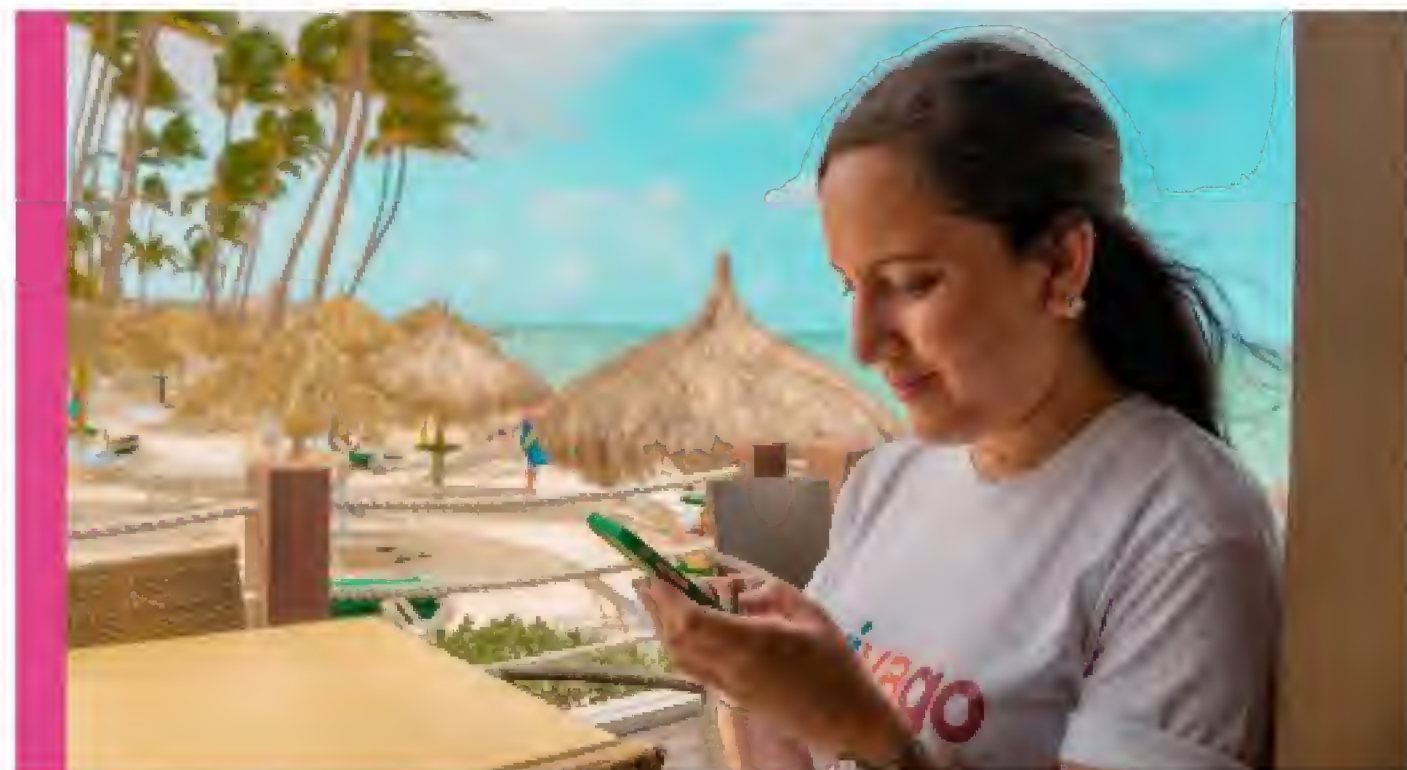
At Niagara, Sharlyze decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in Luxury Hotel Business, where she made the decision to



take an internship opportunity in the Netherlands,

**"I RECEIVED TWO INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, ONE IN NEW YORK AND THE OTHER IN AMSTERDAM. I OPTED FOR AMSTERDAM BECAUSE I HAD ALREADY SPENT MAJORITY OF MY TIME IN NEW YORK: I WANTED TO GO ON A EUROPEAN ADVENTURE AND VENTURE OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE."**

While most Aruban students opt to study in the Netherlands after Aruba, Sharlyze got to experience the Nether-







lands for the first time in May 2013, when she embarked on her internship journey at the Hotel Pulitzer in Amsterdam, working in the Front Office Department. Amsterdam alone wasn't enough to complete her European experience,

**"I REALLY WANTED TO JOIN A PROGRAM IN ITALY. HOWEVER, I HAD TO DO A LANGUAGE TEST. AS AN ARUBAN, WE'RE REALLY GOOD IN OUR FOUR LANGUAGES – SO IT WAS QUITE EASY FOR ME TO PICK UP ON THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE RIGHT AWAY!"**

Sharlyze had to study Italian during her internship in Amsterdam for a year and a half where she obtained a minor in Italian Studies & Languages and Sales & Marketing. After obtaining her minor Sharlyze, along with thirteen other students, successfully managed to enter the program and spent the summer of 2014 in Como, Italy. Sharlyze said that Italy contributed towards obtaining her bachelor's degree faster, "Instead of doing credit theoretical hours on campus, I ended up doing it in Italy."

Sharlyze graduated Niagara University in August of 2014 with a bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management in Luxury Hotel Business, "After Italy I never went back to Niagara," Sharlyze laughs, "I found a job at Disney through the Disney College Program, which completed my degree. So, after Italy I flew to Florida and worked at Disney for sixteen months."

#### EYE-OPENING DISNEY EXPERIENCE

- **WAS WORKING AT DISNEY SOMETHING YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED?**

Yes, and no. While living in Florida I thought about it, but I never actually applied for it. After graduating Niagara, I really wanted to work for a company that, in a way, would





add value to my resume. However, I wanted to have fun while working at the same time; I'm definitely not the type of person to work 9-to-5! "Disney was an eye-opening; the hours were very long!" Sharlyze laughs,

**"WE GOT TO PLAY, BUT WE, ALSO, HAD TO WORK VERY HARD. THERE'S NO CHRISTMAS, NO THANKSGIVING, NO NEW-YEAR'S EVE. DISNEY WAS AN EYE-OPENING FOR ME TO THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY."**

Sharlyze chose to study Hospitality & Tourism because she wanted to obtain a degree that would be useful for her country - Aruba, "I wanted to contribute back to my country. But, after Disney, I don't think that industry is for me," Sharlyze says laughing, "However, it was a beyond-magical experience." Sharlyze shares with us that the bond she created and shared with her peers is "beyond amazing," as she has friends all over the world, "It's a worth it experience to apply to!"

After a year of Disney it got to a point where Sharlyze had to decide if to continue at Disney full time, she would think to herself, "Okay, is this really what I want?"



#### TRIVAGO

She made the decision to start searching for a job casually - for the fun of it. Sharlyze then saw a commercial for Trivago and decided to go on their website. Luckily, they were looking for a Digital Marketing Manager,

**"TRIVAGO WAS LOOKING TO HIRE A NATIVE AMERICAN CITIZEN. HOWEVER, YOU ALWAYS HAVE A NO, IT'S A YES YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AND I HAD NOTHING TO LOSE. SO, I APPLIED FOR THE JOB."**

Sharlyze applied and within two days, she got a video interview which she says was very stressful due to the automation technology process and timed responses. Afterwards, she received a case study where she had to analyze raw data, trends, KPI's, etc. and, to conclude, the interview process took a little over a month and, finally, Sharlyze received the offer to live and work in Germany,

**"I DECIDED TO LEAVE EVERYTHING BEHIND IN THE U.S. AND MOVE TO GERMANY. MY DISNEY COLLEAGUES THOUGHT I GOT TRANSFERRED TO THE GERMANY PAVILION AT EPCOT. I HAD TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT I WAS GOING TO THE ACTUAL COUNTRY AND I WAS LEAVING DISNEY FOR GOOD."**

- **WHERE DO YOU CALL HOME?**  
Definitely Aruba! But, Florida will always be my second home. I affiliate myself a lot with Florida's weather and the conveniences, like having everything open 24/7.
- **DID YOU HAVE A CULTURE SHOCK IN GERMANY?**  
Aruba's culture is very different compared to Germany;





Aruba is very social and our people is very helpful and open towards others. At first, I definitely had some getting used to do - especially with the language barrier.

Nevertheless, almost two and a half years later, Sharlyze says that Trivago made her Germany experience all worth it, "Trivago is an amazing company, I really cannot complain; it's very different, I don't even have a fixed schedule."

Her Trivago journey started in October of 2015, with her title as the Online Performance Account Manager for the North American market and Israel. Which entails that anything in relation to digital marketing i.e. Google, Facebook, email- and app marketing etc., was her responsibility.

**"I GET RATED BASED ON MY PERFORMANCE AND NOT THE HOURS SPENT IN THE OFFICE. THIS WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME, AND ALSO VERY DIFFERENT COMPARED TO AMERICAN COMPANIES."**

At Trivago, Sharlyze has unlimited paid vacation hours as long as she's performing and everything is on track, "I can go with my computer anywhere in the world and work - everything is online."

#### THE OFFICE IS NOT NECESSARILY AN OFFICE

At Trivago, every floor has its own kicker table, PlayStation, Wii, Xbox, and alcohol, "I can sit on a Yoga ball, or lay on the couch, and do my work," Sharlyze laughs, "We're also very casual, there's no dress-code. I can go to work in my Converse and it's totally fine."

Sharlyze shares that she did her research and saw videos before moving to Germany and work at Trivago, but she never expected it to meet, and surpass, her expectations, "We take our job serious, but not too seriously, which makes the atmosphere amazing." Sharlyze continues on elaborating that all of the meeting rooms at Trivago are themed - skateboard, beach and even a Harry Potter theme making it, "never a dull moment at Trivago."

Trivago offers each employee free continental breakfast and unlimited drinks, including alcohol!

**"WE CAN'T FORGET THE TRADITIONAL GERMAN BEER! WE GET BEERS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, THEY EVEN TAKE SUGGESTIONS."**

While they can basically drink however much they want, Sharlyze says that her department doesn't take advantage of it. They know, however, that everyone waits for "Trivago Fridays" with a DJ and, "Once 4'oclock hits on Fridays, everyone knows it's beer' o'clock!" Sharlyze laughs and shares that her colleagues have basically become her family, "It's a very diverse culture - we're all expats there and one of our core values is trust."

#### • WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE YOU'VE HAD AT TRIVAGO?

There's definitely many! But the one that stands out the





**"WHEN ONE DOOR CLOSES, ANOTHER ONE OPENS. OBVIOUSLY, VENTURING OUT IS SCARY – BUT I WAS NEVER SCARED OF IT. YOU HAVE TO MAKE YOURSELF GET OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE, IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE – JUST DO IT. TAKE CHANCES, DON'T BE AFRAID, AND GRASP ON OPPORTUNITIES."**

most are the four core events that occur every year. The first one is Trivago Update in February, then there's the Trivago Summer Party in June, the biggest one is Trivago on Tour, where the company takes you on a surprise trip and the last, but not least, is the Christmas Party. This excludes the mini-parties so, yes, Trivago loves to party!

It's clear to notice that Sharlyze is very passionate about Trivago as she gushes about her most memorable moments with her colleagues, her C.R.E.A.M. team, the parties, her learning experiences, including their "fuck-ups." However, as unforgettable as the experience is for her, she doesn't believe Germany is where she would like to settle down.

#### **HER FUTURE**

Sharlyze says her personal goal is to eventually complete a master's degree, which she is still deciding the subject of. However, one thing she's certain about is that she definitely wants to do it in Florida, either at UCF or FIU,

**"THE ONLY REASON I AM IN GERMANY IS FOR TRIVAGO, SO I DON'T THINK I WILL ATTEND A UNIVERSITY IN GERMANY."**

Sharlyze has more than seven years living, working and studying abroad experience, however, she says that she hopes that one day, eventually, she can settle down at where will always be home for her – the one happy island of Aruba.

Sharlyze concludes by sharing a personal joke with her mom, that she gives her a heart attack, because her mother never knows where Sharlyze will be headed to next. However, in five years, Sharlyze sees herself with a master's degree and settled down in one place; whether in the U.S. or Aruba, definitely something in the world of Marketing.



**"EVERYTHING HAPPENS BY CHANCE, BECAUSE ALL OF MY EXPERIENCES AND EVERYWHERE I WENT, IT'S BECAUSE SOMETHING HAPPENED AND GOT ME THERE; WHETHER GOOD OR BAD."**



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**H**is name is Kevin Alden Rooi, but you may refer to him as "Kev". He is a 27-year-old up and coming graphic designer in the Netherlands who is passionately trying to make a name for himself. He is also a fourth year student of graphic design at Academie Minerva in Groningen. With nearly 900 followers on his well-known Instagram page named "Typomento", Kevin is set to become one of the most talked about artists of 2018.

---

It all started when he was in kindergarten – Kevin used to like drawing a lot... So much that, one day, his kindergarten teacher asked his mother to allow him to take drawing classes; art was something quite fascinating to him. After he became better at drawing, Kevin started painting, and then moved on to air brushing. However, during this period of his life, it was just a hobby for him – something that he would enjoy doing in his free time.

After he successfully completed high school, Kevin decided to pursue a degree in architecture as this was a way, he thought, that he could turn his hobby into a job. Initially, Kevin assumed that he would be able to explore his creativity with architecture – but, of course, that was not the case. In fact, with architecture, Kevin was continuously expected to think inside the box instead of outside the box, he says,

*"I couldn't be creative with my work and I couldn't even be myself because there was a lot of rules and guidelines that needed to be followed."*

Kevin's life took a whole new turn, an interesting one in fact, when Kevin's dad brought back an issue of Web Designer magazine for him after his uncle passed away in the Netherlands. Web Designer is a magazine that displays the work of different graphic- and web designers, while also providing instructions on how to build and create different types of websites. When Kevin saw the first page of Web Designer magazine, he was immediately lost for words; he couldn't believe his eyes and suddenly told myself,

"This is exactly what I want to do!" It was during this moment that Kevin was more certain than ever that Graphic Design is the path that he would like to take; he was serious about turning his hobby into a professional career.

For him, moving abroad or, more specifically, to the Netherlands was almost anticipated as most of his family also completed their education in a different country. It was a natural decision for him and, while he enjoys Aruba's everlasting summer weather, he knew that, at some point, he would embark on a journey overseas. However, initially, the Netherlands was not his first choice; he intended to continue his education in the U.S., but, due to the minimum student financial support students receive from the Aruban government, it was clear that the Netherlands would be his next home. Without a doubt, he enjoys the Netherlands as most things in this country can be done online; whether it is scheduling a doctor's appointment or purchasing concert tickets. On the other hand, the Dutch weather, which is often also referred to as a "bipolar weather" can easily work on his nerves, but that still does not discourage this young man from attempting to become the next great artist.



MEET THE CREATIVE SOUL BEHIND:







## I LOVE TYPOGRAPHY

His passion for typography originated from his love for graffiti, "I used to like graffiti a lot, as this form of art gives you the space to incorporate letters with a flow." But, it was not until Kevin formally designed his first logo that he truly realized that he enjoyed designing his own fonts,

*"I was like oh, this is something I truly enjoy. I started liking the idea of creating my own fonts instead of using existing fonts."*

After this experience, Kevin knew that he had to gain a comprehensive understanding of the world art of graphic design – especially if he wanted to be taken seriously. Sooner than expected, Kevin heard about this workshop called "Art rules Aruba" in 2010 and instantly decided to participate in this program. However, in the beginning, the workshop had absolutely nothing to do with graphic design or typography, but rather photography. During this workshop, Kevin met a gentleman that taught him more about how to incorporate and combine graphic design, typography, and photography and he soon understood that they go hand-in-hand. This experience had opened his eyes in terms of what can be accomplished with design, typography and photography. Once Art Rules was over, he decided to officially pursue an education in graphic design/art and applied for Academie Minerva in the Netherlands.

## PARENTS ARE THE KEY

No one can deny that Kevin is a multitalented young man who is creating a name for himself while also being supported by many other well-known artists in the creative world of graphic design. Kevin says that his strongest and most loyal supporters remain his parents,

*"My parents were always incredibly supportive of basically anything that I wanted to. They knew that I am extremely passionate about art and, even though many if not most people consider art/graphic design just a "hobby", my parents believed in me as much as I did in myself to guide and support me through every step of the way."*

In fact, art is so important to Kevin that he could not imagine doing anything else but art. Art makes him happy – it allows him to push himself with every new project. However, the goal remains to one day be able to work for himself, "I've been in this world for as long as I can remember – it has always given me the opportunity to present what's on my mind. Look, the truth is that sometimes I do not speak clearly and I find myself almost unable to express what's on my mind. I find it incredibly difficult to articulate the words that represent exactly what I am feeling. So, art allows me to illustrate my feelings and my thoughts with a drawing or a design."



## YOU BETTER TAKE ME SERIOUSLY

There is nothing more frustrating than when artists are not taken seriously for their work. Even if an artist considers what he does a “hobby”, we have a duty to respect his work.

Kevin says that many people do not understand how serious he takes his job and they also do not know how much time and effort goes into the design of a particular product. Additionally, people are often surprised by how much he charges for his work – but that is again because they do not quite understand how difficult it can be to design something like a logo or a poster. It is not that people neglect what many artists do, but they neglect the quality that creative people are capable of offering,

*“When business owners refuse to properly invest in an artist/designer, they refuse to invest in their own business.”*

Today, Kevin is working as a freelancer in the Netherlands; his job involves showing potential clients why his work is significant but, most importantly, why his work matters,

*“Of course I also need to understand that each client is different and also requires a different approach.” Kevin says and adds, “However, as soon as I realize that I am not being taken seriously, I end the meeting immediately.”*



## I AM @TYPOMENTO

If you are from one of the ABC islands and you still haven't heard of his Instagram account @typomento, then what are you doing? With nearly 900 followers, Typomento serves as a page where Kevin can tell a story that relates to his culture with new posts, “Since a lot of my designs reflect where I come from, I said, okay, I'll use this as a reason to promote my culture.”

Kevin soon realized that he could not do it alone, so he decided to include more people from the ABC islands on his page to show the different ethnic groups and their unique culture on the three islands. Additionally, since Papiamentu, the native language of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, is only spoken and understood among the ABC islands, Kevin uses Typomento to visually communicate this language to outsiders.



## COURAGE IS EVERYTHING – JUST DO IT!

Kevin is one of the lucky ones. He has the complete support of his parents who have been right by his side since day one. Yet the young man is aware that not everyone would be pleased to hear that their child is eager to pursue a degree in art, “My advice to every artist who is dying to pursue either a degree or a professional career in art is simple – don't ever hide your work. When you hide your art, you neglect a part of yourself; a part of who you are. Whether it's graphic design, typography, drawing, photography, whatever it is you do – show the world, even it's just a hobby.”

At the end of the day, it's all about courage; you got to step out of your comfort zone and do what you have to do. Kevin concludes by saying, “The perfect artist does not exist because every artists is someone that is trying to improve his own skills with everything he creates. An artist is someone who accepts his flaws and remains humble about everything he does. So just go out there and CREATE!”



# 40

**“I WORK HARD  
AND AM PASSION-  
ATE EVERYWHERE  
I GO, BECAUSE I  
WANT TO BE ABLE  
TO SPREAD THE  
PASSION AND  
LOVE I HAVE FOR  
WHAT I DO ONTO  
OTHERS AND BE  
ABLE TO INSPIRE  
THEM.”**





# JOSETTE BURKE,

better known as Josie, 24, is a student at the University of Aruba who plans to graduate in a year and a half with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work & Development. Josie is known amongst her peers as someone who always has a smile on her face, is very helpful towards others and has the ability to light up a whole room – without trying. Recently, Josie spent six months in Frankfurt, Germany on an exchange program she described as, “an amazing, unforgettable experience.”

Just before her move to Germany, Josie was a nominee for Poder di Hubentud in Aruba for recognizing her immense dedication to Aruba's community with volunteer experience at Centro di Bario Playa Pabao, Student Council of EPI's Health & Service Unit, Heart-Centered Leadership Foundation, Women's Club of Aruba, and the student board of Social Work & Development at the University of Aruba – just to name a few!



*“I consider Playa Pabao a meaningful time because this is where I found my passion and, somewhat, decided my career path.”*

While attending Colegio EPI (2010 – 2014), Josie decided to join the Student Council, “I gained a lot of knowledge in organizing, planning and how to promote public events and projects.” However, what she values the most was having the opportunity of being the voice for her fellow students.

Being a member of the Student Council gave Josie many opportunities, one that impacted her the most was a three-day seminar called ACE-Program that she attended in 2012. At the seminar, Josie learned about getting out of her comfort zone, her abilities and why working together is important. While Josie got to know a lot of people and heard stories that impacted her for life, one thing stood out to her the most – the facilitator,

*“How he interacted with the youth and suggested ways we could improve ourselves inspired me. I said to myself, “This is what I want to do and will be doing one day.”*

Josie then received the opportunity to join Heart-Centered Leadership Foundation, where she was responsible for different projects as a resource group leader, guiding the youth through workshops. This is where Josie said she met so many youths with a lot

**D**eciding which career path to take can be a struggle for most. Fortunately, Josie always knew that she would like to help people, she just didn't know in what sense,

*“All I knew was that I wanted to help people so they can make a positive change in their life to live a happy and healthy life; because everybody deserves it.”*

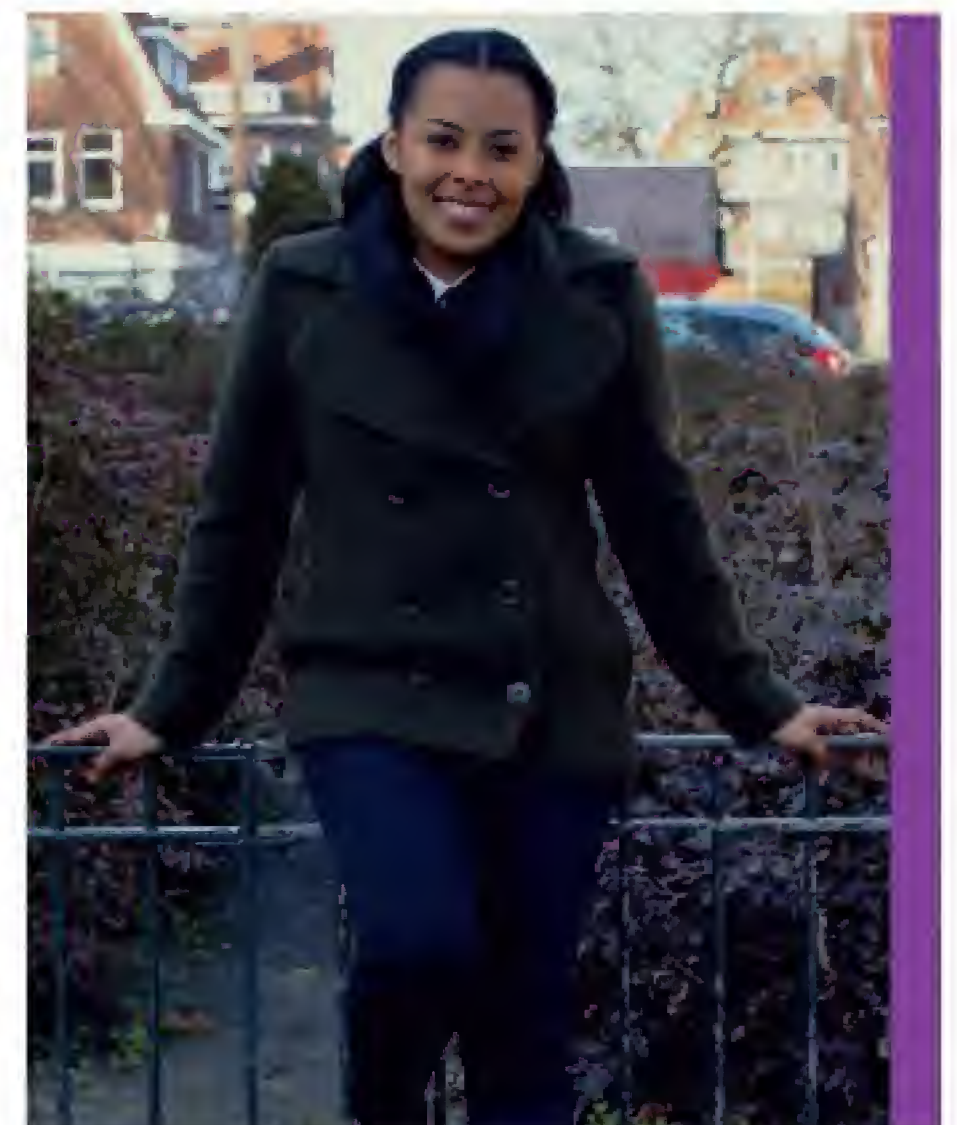
## • WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO STUDY SOCIAL WORK?

Growing up, people would always tell me to become a teacher because I like working with kids. However, I simply

couldn't see myself as a teacher but, I always saw myself working with children and/or people in general. While I read the description of the study at EPI, I got this feeling it was meant for me, I just knew it.

## **"VOLUNTEER WORK IS MY HAPPINESS"**

Some people discover their passion at the age of five, for others it's still unknown, but for Josie, it was all discovered at the age of fifteen – when she started volunteering at Centro di Bario Playa Pabao, where she helped with organizing cultural activities on the island of Aruba,







of potentials who either didn't believe in themselves, had difficulties in their personal lives, or simply needed someone to motivate them and be their support.

*"I am grateful for the support system I have around me, but this made me aware that not everybody has it. I felt like I had the duty and responsibility to provide this to others and make them aware they have the full capability to reach their fullest potential."*

#### • WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO MOTIVATE THE YOUTH?

I think it's important to be that person that believes in them, their abilities and pushes them to strive for more instead of settling for less than they deserve. It's a very critical moment in life when you are a teenager; it's important to have support and know that people care about you no matter what.

#### **"OMG - THIS IS REALLY HAPPENING!"**

With volunteering experience such as Josie's, it shouldn't be a surprise that she would be a nominee for Poder di Hubentud. However, it came as a total shock to humble, grateful and appreciative Josie because, due to her being a volunteer for the organization

a year before, she didn't think it was possible. They didn't immediately tell her that she was a nominee, they had to hear a description of each nominee and guess who they were speaking about,

*"I immediately started to cry. It was the first time in my life that I was speechless; those who know me know I am a talker! It was one of the best moments, and feelings, in my life."*

That's where her amazing and emotional journey began. For about six weeks, Josie, along with all the nominees, had to attend different workshop intended to help them develop into future young professionals. The six-week journey was finalized with a presentation on their past, present and future life.

#### • WHY WAS IT AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU?

It made me reflect a lot on my future, who I am, who I want to be and what I want to achieve. I met amazing other youths with similar interests as me, we created a bond, love and respect for one another. The Poder di Hubentud experience made me get one step closer to do what I want to do in the future - become a motivational speaker for youths.



## "I ALWAYS WANTED TO STAY AND DO EVERYTHING IN ARUBA"

Making the decision to stay and study in Aruba after Colegio EPI was easy for Josie. Besides loving Aruba a lot, she wanted to stay close to family, grow old and be of service to her own community. However, Josie was interested in new challenges and to push herself out of her comfort zone,

*"Frankfurt is known for being multicultural, therefore, it increased my interest to see how multiculturalism function on a bigger scale in the social field. I also wanted to experience living in a big city for myself - which I actually enjoyed!"*

Josie spent six months broadening her knowledge in Social Work at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences. A major challenge Josie had to learn to overcome was being away from her daily life and adjusting to an entirely different environment.

Though there are too many experiences to mention, one highlight is when she organized a farm day for children, whose parents fled to Germany for a better life due to oppressed living circumstances. In addition, Josie got to meet teenagers at a youth center where they had cooking and game

nights together. But, one thing Josie can't forget is the incredible people she made friends with,

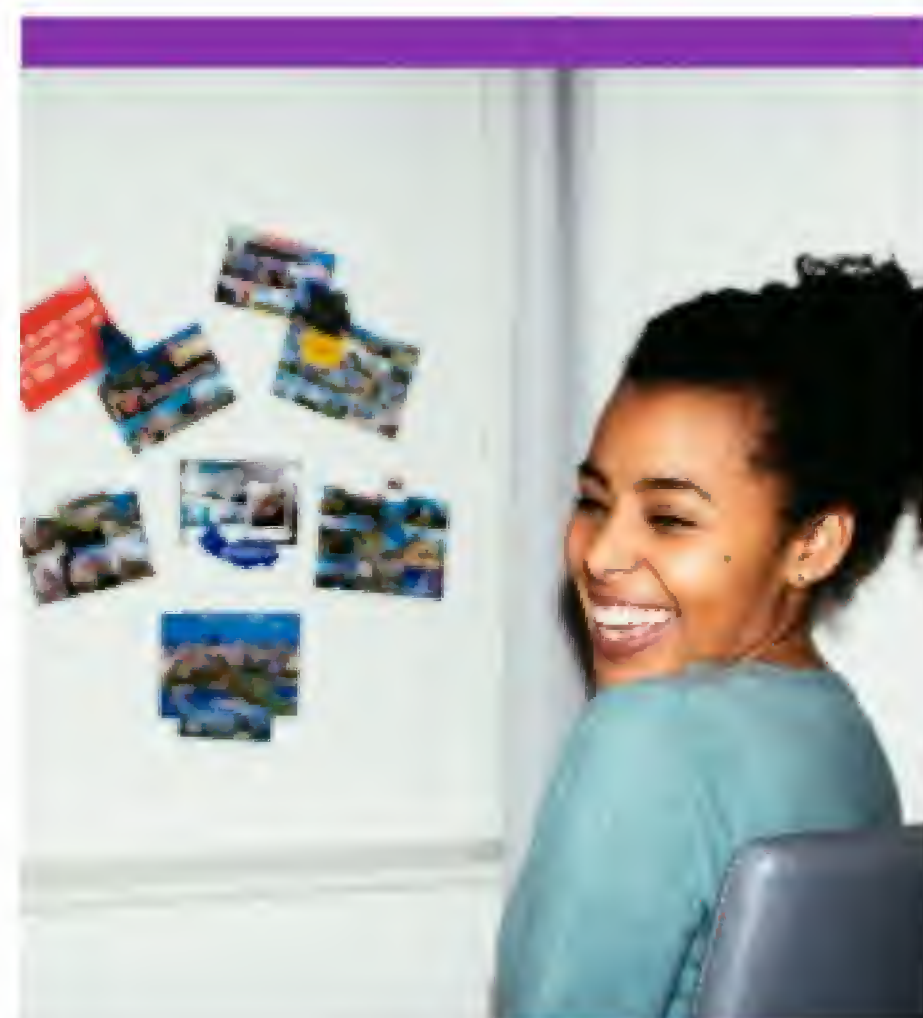
*"I knew I was going to meet new people, but I didn't expect our bond to be so deep. Through hardships and laughter, being miles away from home, these were the people I went through it all with; I can literally say I have friends from all over the world."*

While Josie could never envision herself leaving Aruba, her exchange experience motivated her to stay longer abroad. Josie is currently looking for internships in the Netherlands in hopes that she can also get the abroad working experience and, maybe, continue with her Master's degree in the Netherlands.

## "I KNOW THAT GOD HAS A PLAN FOR ME"

What happens after Josie graduates the University of Aruba is still a surprise for her. However, she is certain that people will continue to hear from her. Whether it's through motivational speeches, her own personal blog or in the community as a volunteer.

When asked Josie how she would describe herself she answered with, "Determined, compassionate and strong,"



as she is mature enough to know that things aren't, nor will ever be, perfect, however, she knows that, at this moment in her life, she is truly, genuinely, happy and strives to showcase this in her everyday life,

*"I work hard to achieve my dreams and goals, but life made me realize that things can't always go as we want and we can't control everything. There's a reason for this we may not understand at the moment, but eventually, we will and that's okay. As long as you feel comfortable with yourself, you are doing good!"*

Finally, Josie concludes with a quote by her favorite book - PUSH: Persevere Until Success Happens. Josie doesn't know what life has in store for her and, sometimes, it scares her. However, she doesn't let that hold her down; Josie realized it's important to not beat yourself for not knowing. She learned to understand that it's important to let your own process happen - as long as you keep PUSH-ing!







fun. interesting  
+ juicy

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MUST READ ARTICLE BY ENDRICK LEON:

# CONSIDERING GOING ABROAD?

Do it!

**W**hether you are considering going abroad for one semester, one year or a longer period, my advice to you would definitely be yes, do it! It's a memorable experience which comes with many opportunities.

Personally, I have moved from Aruba to the Netherlands to continue my studies. Some would consider this already a great step into living abroad, which it is – don't get me wrong! However, I don't get the feeling of being abroad in the Netherlands as there is no difference in the school system, no language barriers and a relatable way of life with Aruba. Also, it could be considered "normal" for Aruban students to move to the Netherlands to study there.

Currently, I'm in my third year of International Business studies and I have the opportunity to spend a whole year living abroad. That's exactly what I have been doing – since July 2017. I have spent one semester in Denmark doing a study exchange and I have recently moved to Vienna for

an internship and I'm enjoying every minute of it. Here are my ten reasons why you should say yes to going abroad...

Going abroad is a **unique chance** that you get now that you are young. It may be the only opportunity you will ever have to travel abroad for a long period of time. Eventually, you grow older, find a job and the chances to go abroad may have been a once in a lifetime opportunity. Often universities are partnered with other universities across the globe which allows you to have a large range of choices of countries which you could go for one semester or more – be sure to check with yours!

Studying in a different country means having to experience a **new educational system**. Not only will you be in a different study environment, which increases your adaptability skills, but there is the chance to study a completely different subject that is not related to your studies at home. This could be a new field of interests and could complement your diploma.



It's the best way to learn a **new culture**. Once you are living in the new country, you will find that you get a better understanding and appreciation of the people and its history. You will have the opportunity to witness a completely new way of life because when you are abroad you will find incredible new foods, customs, traditions and social atmospheres. Not only you will learn about a new culture but this will enable you to see your own culture through a new lens.

The exposure to **meet people from different backgrounds** will be high. Not only will this help you in your social skills but also your interpersonal and inter-cultural competencies. This will allow you to get different views on different topics in life which might help shape your understanding and get new life perspectives.

Make the abroad period to improve your **language skills** or better yet, learn a new language! Being abroad means you will be surrounded by a mixed group of people that speak many languages. So, make use of this to improve a foreign language, learn your host country's main language or just learn a completely new language. Personally, I made use of the opportunity to study Mandarin while I was in Denmark. Of course, I am far from being fluent...

Your time abroad is the time to make lifelong friends, create relationships and **build your network**. Being abroad means being far from your loved ones, therefore you will start to build connections with people who stick together and support each other while being abroad. These people will probably become good connections for the future and a group of global friends. It's awesome to be able to say your friends' group range from anywhere between the US to Nepal to China to Slovakia to Tanzania. After the abroad period ends, make an effort stay in contact with your international friends. In addition to rewarding person-



al relationships, these friends can also be important networking tools later in the future.

Being abroad creates great **opportunities to travel**, you will experience a new country with incredible new outlooks and culture, customs and activities. The benefits of studying abroad include the opportunity to see natural wonders, museums and landmarks of your host country. Moreover, you are not limited to travel, take the chance to travel to neighbouring countries in between your courses or weekends.

**Personal growth** is one great reward that comes while you live alone in a foreign country. You will learn so much about yourself, things you like and dislike! It's an opportunity to discover yourself while understanding a different culture. Being abroad can be overwhelming and stressful, this will test your abilities to adapt to different situations and sometimes will push you out of your comfort zone.

While you are busy trying new things abroad, you could **find new interests**. A different country offers many new activities and interests that you may never have discovered if you stayed at home, you might find that you have an undiscovered talent. It could also be a chance to try something that you have had in mind for a long time, such as a new sport. You will also have the chance to discover other new and exciting forms of entertainment that your host country offers.

While it is not the most important reason to go abroad, going abroad can be **great for your CV**. When you finish your abroad period and return home, you will return with a new perspective on culture, different ways of thinking and do things, more knowledge in your field of studies and a willingness to learn. The international experience provided by studying abroad is likely to be looked on favourably by employers.

Take this opportunity to travel the world with no commitments but to study, learn about new cultures and have fun. Studying abroad is an experience unlike any other!





# Sherrwin RASMIJN

- Birthdate: August 14, 1995 | Education: International Hospitality Management •
- University: NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences | City: Leeuwarden, the Netherlands •

- His favorite TV show is Catfish MTV;
- His biggest fear is big dogs;
- His special talent is, *"Riding a bike without using the handlebars;"*
- His biggest pet peeve is trying to talk to people with headphones on;
- He describes his personality as, *"Charismatic;"*
- His morning routine consists of, *"Waking up, taking a shower, brushing my teeth, making breakfast, doing my morning workout and off to school I go;"*

- He doesn't like people that think they are better than someone else or people that are selfish when it comes to giving a helping hand;
- He says that the up's of living abroad is, *"Being close to so many beautiful countries that you can visit;"*
- He says that the down's of living abroad is, *"You're far from your family and not being used to the sudden weather change;"*
- He feels best when he cuts his hair because it boosts his confidence in how he looks. He added, *"I think that is when I feel best or when I really accomplish a short-term goal;"*
- His motto in life is, *"The only person you should try to be better than is the person you were yesterday;"*
- He wishes people would stop asking him how tall he is, if he can lend them some money or if he misses home;

- He is most proud of the, *"Food, music and folklore dance, in his culture;"*
- He is least proud of the fact that his culture is going to waste and that, *"More international cultures is being adapted to our island;"*
- He says that the most humble person he knows is his mother and grandma because, *"Even though they don't have a lot. Each month they give groceries to poor people back home."*
- The best advice he has received was, *"No matter what happens, keep fighting because at the end of the day we will just remember the good memories and not the bad ones;"*



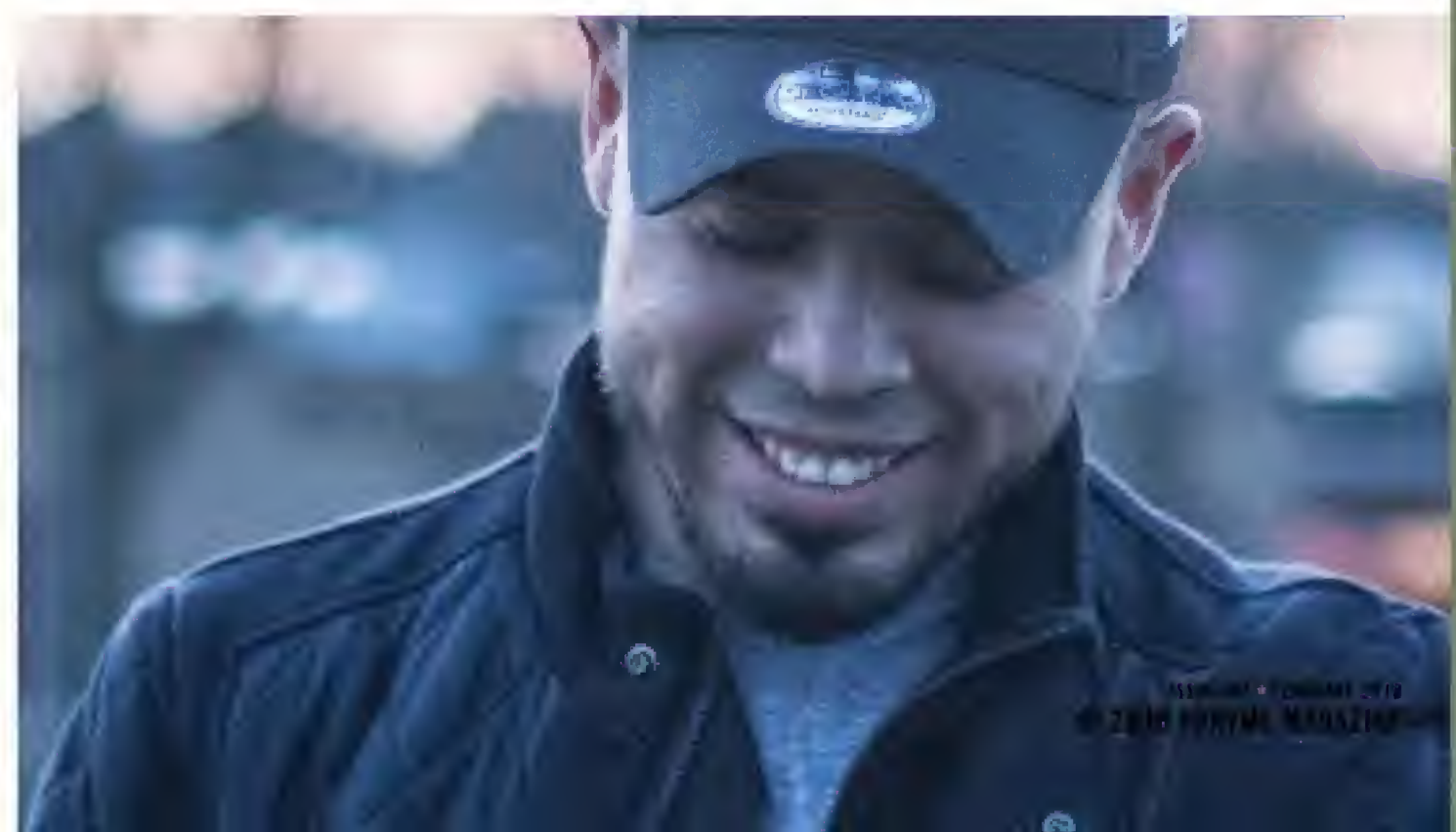




- He imagines his soulmate to be,

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"A TALL, BLONDE, GIRL WITH A GOOD PERSONALITY. VERY FAMILY ORIENTED, KNOWS HOW TO DRESS AND KNOWS HOW TO STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD. KNOWS WHAT SHE WANTS IN LIFE, IS DRIVEN AND MOTIVATED BY HER GOALS. LIKES TO STAY FIT AND STAY HEALTHY, MOST IMPORTANTLY ALWAYS DOWN FOR AN ADVENTURE. ALWAYS TRUST-WORTHY AND HONEST IN STICKY SITUATIONS. THAT IS A LITTLE ON HOW I IMAGINE MY SOULMATE."





SINGLE FEMALE

# Alejandra VILLADA

- Birthdate: March 17, 1995 | Education: International Hospitality Management •
- University: NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences | City: Leeuwarden, the Netherlands •



- She doesn't have a favorite artist and says, "I think it depends on my mood and who I feel more connected to at that moment;"
- Her biggest fear is to live unhappy and cockroaches;
- A few songs she never gets tired of listening to are Jealou\$y by The Neighbourhood, Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen, Redbone by Childish Gambino, Dark angel by Tribal seeds and Heartbreaker – Justin Bieber;
- Her biggest pet peeve is, "WHEN PEOPLE CANT CHEW WITH THEIR MOUTH CLOSED UGHHH!"
- She prefers Wendy's than McDonalds, but added, "McDonalds' chicken nuggets tho...;"



- She is most proud of her achievement to move to the Netherlands, although most people would consider that silly or weird;
- She is most happy about being terrible at thinking she can't do something, "If I want it then I am always going at least try even if it seems difficult."
- The best purchase she has ever made was her MacBook Pro and the worst purchase she has ever made was, "Every time I end up buying junk food;"
- The weirdest thing that has happened to her while in a car is while she was at a tanking station, "This guy came to my window, he was clearly on drugs and he started signing gospel songs to me;"
- She describes her group of friends as, "Social, funny and always ready to party;"



- She would tell her seventeen-year-old self that, "Bad things will happen and you can't control what happens to you but you can control how you react and what you do to turn the situation into a positive one. If you are positive you will attract positivity in your life. Get to know yourself, accept yourself and focus on making yourself happy;"
- She hopes to regret nothing in the future;
- She doesn't think she has any regrets in life because, "Everything I did shaped me into who I am. But maybe something I would not let happen is letting someone bring me down;"





- She imagines her soulmate to be,

**“CARING, HONEST, FUNNY, OPEN  
MINDED, SOCIAL, POSITIVE AND PER-  
FECTLY IMPERFECT.”**



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